

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 15-1097V

Filed: June 28, 2016

UNPUBLISHED

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CURTIS V. BLANKENSHIP,

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Petitioner,

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v.

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Joint Stipulation on Damages;

Influenza ("Flu") Vaccine;

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Guillain-Barré syndrome ("GBS");

SECRETARY OF HEALTH

\*

Special Processing Unit ("SPU")

AND HUMAN SERVICES,

\*

\*

Respondent.

\*

\*

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*Nancy Routh Meyers, Ward Black Law, Greensboro, NC, for petitioner.*

*Claudia Barnes Gangi, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.*

### **DECISION ON JOINT STIPULATION<sup>1</sup>**

**Dorsey**, Chief Special Master:

On September 30, 2015, Curtis V. Blankenship ("petitioner") filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,<sup>2</sup> (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleges that he suffered from Guillain-Barré syndrome ("GBS") as a result of an influenza ("flu") vaccine he received on October 2, 2012. Petition at 1-3; Stipulation, filed June 28, 2016, at ¶ 4. Petitioner further alleges that he suffered the residual effects of this injury for more than six months. Petition at 3; Stipulation at ¶ 4. "Respondent denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner's GBS, any other injury, or his current disabilities." Stipulation at ¶ 6.

Nevertheless, on June 28, 2016, the parties filed the attached joint stipulation, stating that a decision should be entered awarding compensation. The undersigned finds the stipulation reasonable and adopts it as the decision of the Court in awarding damages, on the terms set forth therein.

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<sup>1</sup> Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, the undersigned intends to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, the undersigned agrees that the identified material fits within this definition, the undersigned will redact such material from public access.

<sup>2</sup> National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all "§" references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

The parties stipulate that petitioner shall receive the following compensation:

- a. **A lump sum \$1,824.52, in the form of a check payable to petitioner and HMS Casualty Recovery Unit, 2000 Interstate Park Drive, Suite 401, Montgomery, AL, 36109. Petitioner agrees to endorse this payment to HMS Casualty Recovery Unit. This amount represents full satisfaction of any right of subrogation, assignment, claim, lien, or cause of action the State of Alabama may have against any individual as a result of any Medicaid payments the State of Alabama has made to or on behalf of Curtis F. Blankenship from the date of his eligibility for benefits through the date of judgment in this case as a result of his alleged vaccine-related injury suffered on or about October 2, 2012, under Title XIX of the Social Security Act; and**
- b. **A lump sum of \$150,000.00, in the form of a check payable to petitioner. Stipulation at ¶ 8. This amount represents compensation for all items of damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a). *Id.***

The undersigned approves the requested amount for petitioner's compensation. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/Nora Beth Dorsey**  
Nora Beth Dorsey  
Chief Special Master

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<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**

CURTIS F. BLANKENSHIP,  
Petitioner,  
v.  
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,  
Respondent.

## STIPULATION

**The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:**

1. Curtis F. Blankenship, petitioner, filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10 to 34 (the “Vaccine Program”). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to petitioner’s receipt of the influenza (“flu”) vaccine, which is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the “Table”), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3(a).
2. Petitioner received his flu immunization on October 2, 2012.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that the flu vaccine caused his alleged Guillain-Barre Syndrome (“GBS”), and that he suffered the residual effects of this injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on his behalf as a result of his condition.
6. Respondent denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner’s alleged GBS, any other injury, or his current disabilities.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payment:

a. A lump sum of \$1,824.52 in the form of a check payable to petitioner and HMS Casualty Recovery Unit, 2000 Interstate Park Drive, Suite 401, Montgomery, AL, 36109. Petitioner agrees to endorse this payment to HMS Casualty Recovery Unit. This amount represents full satisfaction of any right of subrogation, assignment, claim, lien, or cause of action the State of Alabama may have against any individual as a result of any Medicaid payments the State of Alabama has made to or on behalf of Curtis F. Blankenship from the date of his eligibility for benefits through the date of judgment in this case as a result of his alleged vaccine-related injury suffered on or about October 2, 2012, under Title XIX of the Social Security Act; and

b. A lump sum of \$150,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all remaining damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. §300aa-15(a).

9. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioner has filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

10. Petitioner and his attorney represent that compensation to be provided pursuant to this Stipulation is not for any items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), to the extent that payment has been made or can reasonably be expected to be made under any State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or

State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or by entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

11. Payments made pursuant to paragraphs 8 and 9 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

12. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursable expenses, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

13. In return for the payment described in paragraph 8 and any amount awarded pursuant to paragraph 9, petitioner, in his individual capacity and on behalf of his heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the flu vaccination administered on October 2, 2012, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about September 30, 2015, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 15-1097V.



14. If petitioner should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

15. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

16. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 9 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

17. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that flu vaccine caused petitioner's alleged GBS, any other injury, or his current disabilities.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION

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Respectfully submitted,

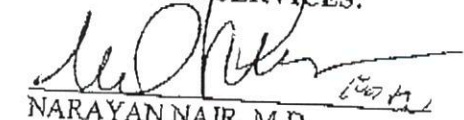
PETITIONER:

  
CURTIS F. BLANKENSHIP


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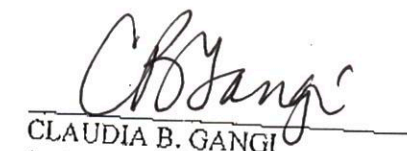
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Dated: 6/21/16